

Message Text

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64

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 INR-07 LAB-04

NSAE-00 SIL-01 DODE-00 PA-02 USIA-15 PRS-01 SP-02

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P R 072335Z OCT 75

FM AMCONSUL VANCOUVER

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2326

INFO AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

UNCLAS VANCOUVER 0892

E.O. 11652 N/A

TAGS: ELAB, CA

SUBJ: B.C. GOVERNMENT PROPOSES DRACONIAN LABOR
LEGISLATION

1. IN EMERGENCY SESSION OF PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURE OCT 7
B.C. PREMIER DAVID BARRETT TOOK FIRM AND UNEXPECTED ACTION
IN REGARD LONG UNSETTLED LOCAL STRIKES. HE INTRODUCED BILL
WHICH WOULD FORCE STRIKING UNIONS TO RETURN TO WORK WITHIN
48 HOURS OF PASSAGE OF BILL. SINCE NDP GOVERNMENT COMMANDS
38 VOTES OF 55 AND SINCE "OPPOSITION" PARTIES WOULD HAVE GREAT
POLITICAL DIFFICULTY IN OPPOSING THIS LEGISLATION, IT IS
REASONABLE TO EXPECT LEGISLATION TO PASS PROMPTLY, PERHAPS
EVEN THIS AFTERNOON. LAW WOULD PUT LABOR BACK TO WORK FOR
90-DAY "COOLING OFF PERIOD."

2. LABOR UNIONS AFFECTED ARE FORESTRY, PULP AND PAPER, B.C.
RAILWAY, TEAMSTERS (DELIVERING PROPANE GAS TO VANCOUVER
ISLAND) AND STRIKERS IN SEVERAL MAJOR FOOD SUPERMARKETS.
LEGISLATION, IN EFFECT, SUSPENDS PROVISIONS OF B.C. LABOR
CODE DURING THAT 90-DAY PERIOD.

3. MOVE IS COMPLETE SURPRISE BOTH TO UNIONS AND TO
MANAGEMENT. MANAGEMENT SPOKESMEN TENTATIVELY ARE
WELCOMING IT. LABOR UNION LEADERS SEEM TO BE SMITTEN
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WITH CONSTERNATION AND DISMAY. IT IS FAR FROM CLEAR

WHAT THEY MAY DO IN REACTION TO THIS LAW.

4. SOURCE IN PREMIER'S OFFICE ADVISES US THAT PUBLIC
RESPONSE SO FAR HAS BEEN "OVERWHELMINGLY FAVORABLE."
STUTESMAN

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NNN

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